# Wealth Not Always Development, Oil-Rich Indians are Discovering

Roosevelt, Duchesne County—"The older order changeth" as Ute Indians of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation find that sudden acquisition of wealth is not an unmitigated pleasure, but also carries certain responsibilities and obligations

This was brought home to the Ute people when the federal government decided that, with settlement of the Colorado land judgment in their favor in 1950 and money coming in from oil royalties and leases, the Ute Indians financially were in a position to be released from wardship of the government All that remained was to educate them sufficiently in the handling of their affairs, and in their duties, responsibilities and privileges as eventual full citizens of the State of Utah

Some of the Utes are taking to this change with enthusiasm Others are confused and fearful of their ability to compete economically and socially in the open market with Utah's non Indian population

Some are accepting their periodic percapita payments and investing the money Others toss their wealth away like children with a dime to spend at a county fair

Some are accepting an expanded tribal government system placidly Others are fighting vigorously for a return to the old three band regime, claiming they do not feel "close" to those who are running their affairs, that they do not have sufficient voice in determining their destiny. They feel that an "impersonal" governing of their affairs may be all right for non Indians, but they want no part of it.

Some are abandoning their age-old culture without a backward glance Others are attempting to adjust to life under the two cultures, the white man's and the Indian's Still others cling tenaciously to the old culture.

Benefits from the money coming into tribal coffers is evidenced throughout the reservation, however, as the Indian's standard of living rises The shanty, wickiup, and hogan are fast disappearing, being replaced by modern and up-to-date homes There have been 88 modern homes built since 1952

Power lines have been extended to the more densely settled portions of the reservation and Indian families now enjoy the comforts that electrical power brings in the way of heating, cooking, radios, television, water pumping, etc.

Almost all Indian families own and drive good cars

As a step in preparing the Ute Indian for eventual full citizenship, the segregated school has been discontinued and Indian children now attend the public schools

Last year there were 370 full blooded Indian children and 125 mixed blood Indian children enrolled in public schools Three full blood Indian children and 50 mixed blood Indian children were attending colleges, universities or vocational schools

There is a high percentage of absenteeism among the Indian students and a certain handicap due to language difficulty. Many of the full blood Indians enter the public schools from homes where little or no English is spoken Plans to counteract these problems are being considered by reservation officials in cooperation with the Duchesne and Uintah county school boards

Various problems are becoming evident as the attempt continues to change the Indian culture for that of the non Indian

Perhaps one of the greatest is the Indian's blithe assumption that his wealth is unlimited Thus far the attempt to educate the majority to the benefits of long term investment and future security has failed

Being unaccustomed to handling money in any great amount many of them, particularly the full blooded Indians, fall prey to unscrupulous salesmen, merchants and money lending agencies They live "high" one day, are practically penniless the next and awaiting the next per capita payment For this reason money belonging to minor children and those deemed incompetent, is held in trust and released only for investment in permanent housing land development, or for schooling clothing, medical care, etc

Another problem is the Indian's inability, after years of tax-free wardship under the federal government, to understand why government of his affairs should now be paid from his pocket

Segregation of the tribe into the two groups has been brought about through realization that members of the mixed blood group, because of their greater familiarity with non Indian culture, could probably prepare themselves more quickly for their roles as full citizens than could the full blood Indians, who for the most part have only a superficial understanding of the white man's culture

The Affiliated Ute Citizens are due to be terminated from federal supervision on or before August 27, 1961 Members of the Ute Tribe will continue under federal supervision until the majority feel capable of administering their own affairs in our highly competitive social and economic system —Salt Lake Tribune